

2025 IDSA Student Merit Awards Juror Role & Responsibilities

About Student Merit Awards

The Student Merit Awards (SMA) are held annually in each of IDSA's five North American Districts. It is one of IDSA's longest running programs and highlights the very best creativity, problem solving and design brilliance among emerging design talent. SMA finalists, winners, and the schools they represent benefit from massive media exposure through IDSA's extensive reach and high-level industry recognition. IDSA is proud to witness the incredible acceleration that winning an SMA provides in the professional success of those who participate. In many cases, most SMA finalists and winners graduate with strong job prospects or have already secured employment within a design firm or corporate team.

Student Merit Awards Categories

Each year, an undergraduate and graduate winner is selected from each District for this prestigious distinction.

Colleges and universities hold a competition to select a school's finalists. These students go on to submit their work in IDSA's awards system where they are judged by our esteemed jury.

Student Merit Awards Juror Role & Responsibilities

The Jury is responsible for evaluating and scoring undergraduate and graduate submissions to select winners, promoting the SMA and winners, and offering feedback on the juror experience. Specific responsibilities include:

- Participate in a virtual orientation and virtual jury meetings as necessary.
- Use IDSA's online awards platform for all review and scoring of submissions in the required timeframe.
- Ensure fairness, consistency, and adhere to established evaluation criteria while evaluating assignments.
- Notify staff and the SMA Jury Chair of any conflicts of interest and recuse themselves if they are not able to evaluate submissions fairly without bias.
- Uphold confidentiality and impartiality throughout the evaluation process.
- Advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the evaluation process.

Additional Role & Responsibilities of the Student Merit Awards Jury Chair

- Collaborate with staff to ensure timely progress towards scoring decisions.
- Ensure jurors understand their roles, responsibilities, and evaluation criteria.
- Prepare for and lead virtual deliberations if required.

Time Commitment (May – June)

- May (1-2 hours) – Initial kickoff committee meeting and orientation webinar
- June (3-6 hours) – Review and evaluate nominations / select award recipients.
- The SMA Jury Chair can expect 3-5 additional hours to fulfill their responsibilities.

Eligibility to Serve

- Ability to commit to the time requirements.
- IDSA members in good standing and representative of IDSA's diverse communities.
- Individuals from academia and professional practice are welcome to apply.

Composition

- Five (5) members each per sub-group and inclusive of mix of academic and professional members.

Term

- One (1) year; up to two (2) consecutive terms.